



**SPHI Seed System Community of Practice  
Summary of Discussion Topic**

**Title: TOPIC 6-Good ideas deserve to be shared----and look what new information comes out!**

**1. Summary of participation statistics**

Table 1 shows the summary of participation statistics under this topic.

Duration	Lead discussant; institution & country	No. of contributions	No. of unique respondents	No. & type of institutions	No. of countries
8 days 27 <sup>th</sup> July – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug 2015	Wilfred Mushohozi- CEO - Crop Biosciences Solutions, Tanzania	22	14 (11 Male, 3 Female)	NARI (2), CIP (5), Private sector (2)	6

**2. Introduction**

This topic was an opportunity for a CoP member from private sector to share his experiences in scaling out the net tunnel technology into schools, and working with farmer associations to evaluate sweetpotato varieties for root quality targeting potential export markets, and to brand roadside kiosk with messages about OFSP planting materials/roots and use as selling points. From the starter tissue culture materials, he obtained from CIP, he has multiplied and disseminated to over 88 schools, which have established gardens and over 500,000 mini G1 cutting accessed by farmers for further multiplications. He shared photos that illustrate this work. At the same time, he sought advice from the COP members on the variety evaluations. The topic and its objectives stimulated responses from the community, some enquired about varieties that were in demand and the specific target markets (e.g. Europe, Israel or domestic urban), while other members gave advice on how to manage agronomic practices (spacing and ridge) to obtain more uniform root shape and size. The topic ran for 6 days, and realized 22 contributions from 14 unique respondents (See Table 1 for participation statistics). This summary highlights the key points, any areas of consensus, disagreement, and any ideas suggested that members could consider to try/test in their work to further learning and inform development /practice in sweetpotato seed system.

**3. Key points and areas of consensus/disagreement.**

*Target market:* More clarity was sought regarding the target market(s). That domestic urban markets are be interested in value for money, whereas, European markets would favor low dry matter, and oval shaped roots (no ridges). He explained that the target market is an Israel Company. An Israel company is keen to import OFSP roots from farmers in northern Tanzania and has requested a farmer association to run trials to evaluate available varieties under Israel GAP (from field preparations to harvesting) and on attributes such as yield and root sizes. Good candidates will be deployed for large-scale production under Israel agronomic supervision.

*Advice on varieties:* The following varieties were proposed:

- Some varieties are currently being grown in Tanzania- Kabode, Mataya, Jewel, and Kiegea. However, the large size and irregular shape of Kabode roots, does not meet those specified for the Israel market. Advice on crop management practices to address this issue was asked and is mentioned below.

- A member from Rwanda suggested Vita, an OFSP variety and Polista, a white variety, if the market is not limited to OFSP. Similarly, a respondent from Mozambique suggested to include Bela because of low dry matter and higher beta-carotene.
- An OFSP variety, UMUPO3 (also called Mothers delight) released in Nigeria by the National Root Crops Institute could be considered for the evaluations. It is has good shape and size, is deep orange and has low dry matter.
- KEPHIS requested anyone who had 440293 (genotype name for some OFSP material) to send them some so that they can use to verify/confirm with some material they have. Turns out that Nigeria has the 440293, (which varietal name is UMUPO3) and can provide it.

*Advice on crop management practices for root shape and size:* The following are the crop management practices to obtain desired root shape and size:

- Rather than early harvesting, which had been suggested, close spacing with two rows per ridge, while alternating the hills, is recommended. Close spacing gives medium size roots and minimizes the plant population.
- Another member also concurred that root size can be managed by manipulating plant density (increase number of plants per area-ridge or mound, while root shape improves under light soils. Where the soil is heavy, it is worked to fine particles so that root penetration is easy during growth.

#### **4. Status on suggested follow up actions on emerged ideas or techniques (to updated at CoP meeting)**

Though no specific ideas for further research, a feed back from the planned variety evaluation trials would be beneficial to the members, especially if the suggested crop management practices for managing root size and shape were tried in the evaluations.

Table 2: status of suggested follow up actions on ideas or techniques

Suggested idea for action	Follow up action taken	Where (country) & institution	Feedback to CoP
Close planting spacing		Tanzania, CBS &TAHA	
Cultivation on the light sand soils	Sandy soils land has been secured for large scale production	Tanzania, CBS &TAHA	